

be brave bold mason

OUT

IN

be brave bold mason.

A “be brave bold robot” publication. Published exclusively for the summer 2005 musical “tour” of Mason Lindahl, who sings heartily and is an avid fan of debaucheries of all varieties. He will hug you if you let him. He will share cigarettes and beverages with you. His energy moves one to applications of labels such as “model young bohemian”, and “crazy ass kid”. It is very possible that he will try to influence your decisions with his various charming witticisms and compliments. Let him if you like, he will do little to no harm. In fact, he might give you invaluable insight into how a young man’s mind works. Go ahead, explore him. If you are a believer in the concept of the experience being worth the adventure (however fraught with mystery and moist corners), then you will thank yourself once the exploration is through.

Avenues of connection with this Mason that I speak of:

- 1) www.myspace.com, the Music section, look for “Mason Lindahl”
- 2) www.masonlindahl.com
- 3) go to the Naked Lounge in Sacramento, CA. and ask around.

Methods of contacting the person who published this zine:

- 1) www.bebraveboldrobot.org
- 2) www.myspace.com, the Music section, look for “i guide the particle.”
- 3) email deanhaakenson@gmail.com

I Develop a Severe Chemical Imbalance

I am not heard from for nine months until one day I stagger into Boyd County Hospital in Kentucky with mysterious circular scars on my neck and a missing left pinky toe. I tell all the doctors and nurses gruesome stories of back-alley beatings and inescapable k-holes even though I really don’t remember a thing. Television news crews crowd around my hospital bed as I recount how I traded my kidney to a black-market surgeon named Jeb for eight pounds of frozen ground beef and a half-empty bottle of Jagermeister. Then one night I tear off my hospital gown and run stark naked into the woods where I trip over an exposed pine root and dislocate my kneecap against a slab of granite. I scream and scream and scream, even after a young couple sinning just over the ridge uses their Nokia mobile to report a murder behind Boyd County Hospital. Eventually the cops show up and wrap me in a beige polyester blanket before shoving me in the back of a squad car. Sergeant Willis and Anderson drive me all the way to Ashland and admit me to Our Lady Bellefonte Hospital, a well-respected psychiatric facility, where I attempt to stick my tongue down the head nurse’s throat because I like the way her everlasting breasts stretch the fabric of her white cotton uniform. I stay at Our Lady Bellefonte for a good month or two while the doctors try to figure out what the fuck my problem is, but I don’t mind because I meet this girl Polly who thinks I’m Pierce Brosnan, and her and I have unprotected sex at least three times a day, and the food really isn’t that bad, and the head nurse stops wearing a bra altogether, and I make friends with the custodian, Jerry, and he sneaks me swigs from his whiskey flask.

When you fall in love with me you will quit your job to hitchhike and jump trains and follow henry rollins and elvis costello like the dead, and we'll be forced into selling apples and toothpicks to dusty rednecks and hillspeople from the ozark mountains. I can call you little tree and you'll call me grandma. we'll hide from things like the IRS and cranberry bran muffins, and live in motels where the dust never settles and the toilet never works, but we'll be happy because we'll have no mortgage or no television to remind us of the rest of the world because what do they know anyways? they'll have nothing on our dirty fingernails and torn jeans... and we'll sneak into the hull of a ship traveling to south africa or south carolina, and end up in the fields of peru where red-headed aliens and gremlins who terrorize goats run savagely into the rainforests, but only after turning around and sending you a smile that makes you ache to be five again, and know what it is like to be simple and devious and get away with everything. we'll write love letters to each other from opposite sides of the bed, and burn them in the morning before reading them because there are no words to explain it all. and no breath will be wasted on things like arguing with the natives or peddling our theories on life and the wires and tiny clicks that keep it together because we will radiate our own knowledge with every explosion of dirt when our feet touch the open road. we will never look back because the word deviance looms before us with more passion than we know how to hold inside. and when we get to whatever great river that flows in the hills and mountains of central peru we'll both throw down our glasses and jump in and see everything with more clarity than the sharpest knife can cut... we'll frolic in the water, more pure than even evian can claim, watching as huge prehistoric fish swim fifty feet below us... then shriek and flee the water as tiny fish sink their teeth and cling to the flesh of our inner forearms. we'll be saved by a man who bears an astounding resemblance to sean connery and live off spider eggs and the sap of plants whose scent travels to native villages and lures men deep into the flora and when they finally reach the source of this unignorable temptation, they are attacked and consumed by the green jaws that drip with the blood of all the men before them. and we'll laugh to ourselves at our cannibalism. we'll smoke paupula flower cigarettes and discuss our mothers and the way the sky looks green in reflection, and topics such as the way the world operates and how it goes on without us will never cross our minds because we are beyond the everything of everyday life. and we will never use words like stigma or necessity but keep them down to simple things like "my, that rodent-spider has incredibly large fangs," or "let's be on our way now." and we'll leave without saying goodbye, only hanging a leaf from the trunk of the tribe's grandfather tree, with the tip of it pointing straight up. and leave them to make what they will of it. we'll settle in morocco and eat lamb pastries and critique foreign films and construct our own rowboat and float to greece one morning when the alcohol in our stomachs makes us queasy with expectation and indifference. we'll name our children nikolai and magpie and in a little cottage cut off from the rest of the world, we'll raise them to believe in unicorns and the magic a dried branch of thorny roses can have. they'll drink wine and grow old and leave us in the faery dust we sprinkled for them, and resent us for keeping the "real" world out of their grasp... and we'll return to the city because we'll miss automatic sliding doors and the way women hold their cigarettes. and we will fall into things like retirement and mobile homes and hang framed pictures from before we left and after we settled, and wonder what happened in between. but we'll be lost in senility, and I'll bake apple pies and garlic foccacia bread, and wonder where in the world we are... as you throw the dog out the window to save us from the grenade fermenting deep within its ribcage, or maybe to save it from the laser-eyed monkey hiding in the shadows of the wall, but I'll never know because you'll never tell me. you'll call me grandma and forget why, while I simply bellow commands from the steam of boiling jars to can okra and mulberry sauce because I cant remember the last time I knew your name. and we'll still refuse to have the paper delivered or subscribe to magazines, but all our righteousness will be lost in the tiny jar of seeds from the apples we could never convince anyone to buy.

An Independent Day

Thursday Morning, the day before the day when people get rowdy to celebrate what they view as their right to do so. I have a sty in my eye, and thankfully, although it is as debilitatingly large as I think a sty can possibly get, it is coming to a head, and I feel it will be gone soon. After four hours sleep last night, I am returning my lover's laundry to her, clean and folded. She reacts by passing back out in bed. I take off walking briskly, in order so that I am not late and my boss does not have another reason to hate me. Hurriedly wading towards icy waters. As I am walking, solitary, down L St., nearing 21st, I am passed by a disheveled looking black man on a bicycle.

"Hey" he shouts in my general direction as he passes me.

"Hey" I shout back as he continues riding, very poorly, I might add. He brings his bike to a stop at the intersection in my path, using his feet instead of the brakes that are not there, and turns so that he can speak at me, still perched on his bike. He is wearing Pajama bottoms, and a old dirty T-shirt. On his feet are those rubber foam Tiva-esque sandals. On his head is a somewhat new looking baseball cap, worn high on the head much like you would see a kid wearing on a T-ball team, who really didn't want to be there. Due to his hat "topping" his head, and not really "capping" it, I see that his hair is naturally dreaded in tight rolls, shortish, and crazy in that cool sort of way. I like hair like that. I don't tell this to the man. He has about half of his teeth, but, luckily for him, still retains most of the front ones.

"Help" he says in a crazy sort of way

"What"

"Can you help me out?"

"Sorry man, I don't have any change", I say as I see that I am going to miss my opportunity to cross the street by walklight. I urge him to cross the street with me.

"Come on, buddy, let's go....come one"

The entire time, his gaze is not focused on any one thing, especially me when we are conversing, and so, once again, he kind of looks wildly around and then grabs his bike in a panic and attempts to catch up with me as I am almost across the walk. He stops in front of a car that is stopped at the red light....as though he needs to say something to the driver. The driver evidently does not want to hear whatever it is this man has to say because he lays on his horn quick, yet sternlike, to usher the man out of his way. The guy crosses the rest of the way. I wait for him, but continue to proceed with my walking as if to say, "Uhhh, I will listen to you and stuff, but you gotta understand that I am on my way to work, and my boss already hates me....so I am gonna keep walking, and you can accompany me and talk, if you want to"

He accompanies me and talks.

"they took it all from me.....they took my clothes, they took my money, they took my (he was hard to understand...coulda been any number of things).....they took it all.....hey, Wanna buy a bike?"

He says this obviously meaning the old crusty, I could assume stolen, no brake having, Mountain Bike that he is riding. The seat post is bent in a broken sort of way.

"No Thanks" I say. If I were rich.....I still wouldn't buy such a thing. No matter how much help people need, I will still always push the envelope that has written on it "If you want to be a salesman, you must first retain a quality product to sell. Sure, you might be able to sell garbage to suckers....but they will always be suckers doing the buying, and really, how much of a challenge is that"....or something to that effect that would fit on an envelope.

I remember that I have a Peach in my bag and that I wouldn't mind giving it to this guy....who I think could use some fruit....and I ask, "Hey, you want a Nectarine.....a piece of fruit?", at the same time forgetting that it is a peach, and not a nectarine....or maybe just wanting very badly to use such a complex word as "Nectarine".

He nods, and (all the while still with that glossy eyed stare off into space) continues informing me of how much he doesn't have....

"Man....All I have is this bike"

"and now, this nectarine", I say as I pat him on his shoulder. A stiff grab/pat while facing him. Much like a Dad would give his son if he didn't exactly feel like hugging him. He immediately takes it and brings it to his mouth, like a man possessed. A very honest movement, which I enjoy.

I begin to walk away, and as I do, he shouts, "mmm, ssss a Peach!"

"Oh yeah! You're right, it is a Peach!"

He continues to eat. I continue to walk, mulling the encounter over in my mind. I don't think long about it, as one should not, but do come to a snappy little point that could supersede a story such as this one:

Even though you may be drawn to use big words, they will do little good in describing essentially simple things – **Pleasant over Professional**, Simple be the way.

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at

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to
,
ay

be

y,
ed

Not a Sexy Grrr

Grrr.
And that's not a sexy grrr either.
It's a GRRR grrr.
Grrr.

Just Whistle

Did you ever hear the story of the guy who taught his dick to whistle? He figured out how to suck air into his urethra by finely contracting his muscles, and then force it back out to make a whistle. He got so skillful at it that he could even control the notes and play a little tune.

He practiced it constantly, even at work, which made some of his colleagues uncomfortable, but he was practically obsessed with it. Because he didn't much care for making friends, he had a lot of time to sit by himself and think about his whistling dick, and before long he exaggerated it in his own mind until he believed it to be an art form, a mode of expressing himself. And so he practiced even more obsessively.

One night he dreamed of playing a complex tune, something he wasn't good enough to pull off in waking life, and he awoke to the sound of his dick whistling that tune. It had been whistling in his sleep. From then on, he found he made the most progress in his rehearsals by undertaking them in his sleep. He would go to sleep thinking of a tune he wanted to practice, and during the night his dick would whistle the tune over and over, all night long. He set up a bedside tape recorder in order to measure his progress, and wore earplugs to bed so he wouldn't wake himself up. He also began to take plenty of depressants and sleeping pills so he could get more practice time in.

It happened that, as he was going over a previous night's recordings, he thought he heard words. Amazed, he dropped his drawers and stared into his third eye and tried to will his dick to speak. In a thin, wheezy voice, his dick said, "Hel-lo." He had to rapidly suck in and expel air for each syllable of a word, which tired out his dick muscles and made his peehole tender and sore, but by the end of the day he could make his dick say "Hi, there" and "Suck me."

This marked the advent of a whole new phase in his career. He would go to bed thinking of songs, poems, or phrases from his favorite movies, and when he awoke his practice tape would be full of the sound of his dick talking and singing. The drugs he was taking in order to sleep were badly affecting his health, but he doubled his dosage so he could advance his art even more rapidly. In 24 hours he might be awake six, and then five, and then three. He was dedicated to his craft; he had begun to live entirely on his savings and saw no one.

His dick was speaking in paragraphs now. He knew he was on the brink of a new breakthrough; he could feel it in his bones. He was elated beyond words when, one afternoon, he was scanning through his practice tapes and heard his dick say something he didn't immediately recognize. It sounded as though it were speaking to someone else. For the first time, it seemed his dick was learning to talk on its own.

But on listening closer, he was perplexed. He heard, or seemed to hear, it saying, "Die, man. Just die. Just die, you fucker. Die. Just die." He pulled down his shorts and found that his dick was still repeating these words. "Die. Please just die. I hate you. Just die."

"Are you talking to me?" he asked, but his dick made no answer. It only continued in its high, piping voice (with a hint of a lisp), "Die. Fucking die. Fuck you. Just die."

This disconcerted the man terribly. He stopped taking his pills and gave up practicing, but his dick would not stop telling him to die. He found he could not make it stop. It was beyond his control. He tried to go out in public, but his dick would scream terrible things about him to passersby, and people scuttled away from him in aversion to this apparent madman. He couldn't convince anyone that it wasn't him talking—it was his dick.

Day after day, he sat alone in his apartment and tried to tune out the sound of his dick telling him to die. Turning up the volume on the stereo or television did not help; his dick screamed louder. He lost confidence in himself, began shuffling instead of walking, wept for no reason. He began to believe that he really ought to die, as his dick said. Finally one day he asked his dick in desperation, "Why? Why do you say that? Why do you hate me so much that you want me to die?"

But his dick would not answer him. It just said, "Die. Please. Please die. Please die." And he replied, "Okay. I will." He filled his bathtub with warm water and leapt in, clutching the straight razor he intended to cut his wrists with. But at the moment of action he found he couldn't do it. He didn't have the willpower. He thought to himself, "Am I so bad? Am I really so bad?"

fetish

He liked the way that hair smelled. His name was Bill and he had no hair himself. Even when he did have hair, he would shave it; first with the clippers, and then with a straight edge. I am even going to go so far as to call it a hair fetish, this "thing" that Bill had. This preoccupation. It was a preoccupation with banality, in terms of hair. You know that smell of some hair that is very perfumey...that really nice intoxicating smell of mostly girls' hair that just takes you straight from head top to apple orchard....he didn't really like that smell. No, he more so liked the more natural smell of hair. The one where the smeller could still smell the "humanity" of the smellee. it was usually so much shampoo mixed with the smell of natural hair oils. that was the standard smell that he liked. And the more oily the smell, the better. Bill liked to smell hair, but only hair that smelled like hair, if you get my meaning.

So. What it was with Bill and this hair thing was mostly the way that he would greet you. He was very normal and really quite charming, and would greet someone in the normal way. "Hi, I'm Bill" shake shake "nice to meet you. wow, you have nice hair". and then Bill would usually touch the hair a bit. This usually got him the label of "gay" by some of the guys that he did this too, but usually it was the same guys that also think that hugs are gay, so it never really bothered...anybody really. So, after Bill would touch your hair and the conversation would maybe move to something else, Bill would always smell his fingers. Ohhh, how those sweet human oils keep on a man's fingers. Some nice oily hair would usually keep Bill's fingers fragrant for half a day. these undercover smell indulgences would keep Bill's obsession at bay most of the time, but the Bill would still have to act out every now and again.

The Hug. Whenever possible, Bill would initiate embrace. He loved people and his hugs were always pure and healing in nature...but there was also always a small hidden motive. Bill wanted to get his nose in the hair. to sniff the follicles. to snort the 'do. He wouldn't make any of those telltale smelling sounds that often accompany the smelling of things. He would just take a deep breath through his nostrils. This made being hugged by him quite a relaxing experience, because, for a brief moment, all you could think about was deep breaths and oxygen and life cycles and body rhythms.

Bill never really asked anyone outright if he could just smell their hair. Maybe all of the excitement for him was that no one knew. a dime sized spot of none too smelly shampoo.

I Order China Quite Often

So what
if I get off popping bubble wrap?
Fuck,
it's not like
I hump vending machines.
Besides,
I bet you like popping bubble wrap.
I bet
you're imagining those
supple
air
pockets
right
now,
the way the plastic
melts around
your fingertips the instant
just
before the bump
pops,
and I bet you've got
goose bumps,
petite plastic bubble wrap
goose bumps
all over your body,
and
I bet
it's driving you mad.

even more fancy uses for the term “punk rock”

I was drunk. So drumdrowned (screwed down) and pie-eyed that friends more aware than I felt inclined to inquire, “you’re not driving, are you?” I wasn’t driving. I was going to take my bike. I love my bike. It fits me well. The time was about two o’clock, in the a.m. Late night. Nearing early morning. The party was starting to wind down. You could tell from all the glassy eyes turning door-ward. I had left my bike at my friend’s house and he was leaving, so I was beckoned to go with, on foot, which I did, to get my bike, which I did. I started riding it. The wind whipped around my face and hair in a pleasing way. It pooled up in my ear orifices as a constant reminder that I was moving. I was swerving a bit. But, it was very controlled. Like the way people flail about in a loose controlled fashion when they are practicing martial arts with names like “Drunken Fist”, and...that other Brazilian one...you know. Like that.

More a widening of stance than a lessening of ability.

I rode through the barren sleepy river town streets.

I soon wheeled by the following scene:

A house, probably built around the 1920’s or 30’s. quaint cottage style. Remnants of Victorian influence smattered about. Pronounced staircase tapping the sidewalk. In the yard, on the stairs, on the grassy area on the other side of the sidewalk, on the driveway...things. People’s things. As though the house had had enough of the clutter and in a purging fit, put price tags on several of its contents and threw the bulk of them up. It was an unmanned garage sale. I stopped my bike. I figured on one of two things; a) they had left these things wanting late night shoppers to peruse at their leisure, and, expecting them to be honest, leave money on the stairs somewhere. Or b) they were just too lazy to cover and/or move things, and were going to start back up the next day, and though they would prefer for the items to be left alone, they realized that that was an impossibility and would just settle for people not assuming the things were free and/or taking any large amount of them. The things were too nice to just be free, and I didn’t see any “Free” signs or anything. Honestly, regardless of what I might have tried to objectively tell myself the true intentions of the garage sale people were, I was, very deliberately and with many justifications of grandeur, going to leave the scene (in the still of the night) with any such choice items that I might happen to run across. One of the first things that my attention lit upon was a glass-framed poster of a map of Italy. It was one of those folded up maps (purchased in Italy, I deduced from the Lira price tag still attached) that was unfolded and then framed. I wanted it. I put several dollar bills on one of the steps, along with a note explaining what I had taken and contact information should they require more money. I awkwardly held the heavy framed thing up with my

left hand, grabbed my handlebars with my right, and took off. I immediately noticed that what was once an amusing multi-wheeled saunter from side to side, had now become a struggle to ride straight. I kept having to readjust my grip on the glass behemoth, and steering seemed to be occupying an annoying amount of my concentration. I was chugging along, but it was cumbersome. And then, I came upon a pile of leaves. I swerved. Too sharply.

The front tire stopped cooperating.

I attacked the ground from the left side of the bike. My amazingly reflexive body fell limp, anticipating the impact. my upper body surfed the concrete like a skipping stone makes contact with the water prior to its lifting off again. my chest area and left, frame-holding hand hit the ground first, my head momentarily after, the forehead part scraping the ground. Unlike a skipping stone, my inertia vanished and I came to a rest.

The glass shattered expertly when it hit. It broke the sleepy silence so efficiently that there seemed to exist an echo, although the conditions were not even close to appropriate for such aural phenomena. I popped right up (thank ye lord, for your numbing alcohols!) I scuttled the framed paper from under the broken glass, making several “tankle” and “scrubble” noises. I left without even checking my wounds. I felt a moist stickiness on the salvaged map in my hand. I remember thinking at the moment that it could be some sort of glue on the back of the poster. You know, like wallpaper paste or something.

When I was almost home, I realized that it was my blood on the map. Lots of it. I had cut my hand on the glass. My forehead hurt. My knee was scraped. I smeared blood on my front door as I opened it. I put my bike in the corner, washed off my cut bloody hand, grabbed a paper towel, folded it appropriately and scotch taped it around my bloodiness. My forehead and knee were tame and manageable and had stopped bleeding already.

They were just very scraped. Road rash, etc. I investigated and found no other cuts. I set the map out for the blood to dry. It is my cherished prize. It is up on my wall today, dried blood streaming across like fingers of a river. Because the glass fiddled only with my lower palm, my bandaged hand still types with the accuracy that I am used to. I can even play guitar still. I can't wear a hat, and it hurts to furl my brow. But, I have a feeling that this head wound might appear “manly” or “sexy” to some. That's probably mostly projection. Because, very seriously, pain makes me feel powerful. Like I've been through something (and succeeded!...and SURVIVED!!!). Makes me exude a confident fatigue. An accomplished nonchalance. Like I am a deserved recipient of the admiration associated with utterances such as “now that, my friend, is punk rock.”

...I think I'll get another tattoo...

The very lovely people who have handcrafted the
things in this small, independently published
magazine, somewhere along the line, were given the
following names (in alphabetical order):
Eric Bourne (a couple of his interests are "Nerd"
rap and professional sports);
Violet Edison (her real name is Cassie Smith, and
she is very kind);
Dean Haakenson (he sometimes comes on too
strong but begs that you forgive him);
Dale Stromberg (he lives in Japan and chooses his
words wisely)

Sunset Lanes

Jesus went to Sunset Lanes
Wore sandals and
Bowled a 300
Or
Jesus went to Sunset Lanes
Rented shoes and
Bowled a 127

an idle evening toward the end of the month

This time, I was on my bike, riding from work, to home. The day had been slightly stressful, and the weather was, well...let's just say "Hot as Fuck". I was really looking forward to getting home, cranking up the old window box of an A/C that I had, and maybe eating a burrito. as I thought more about the burrito that I had waiting for me, I kept thinking of all the ways I could choose to prepare it. I knew that I had moved my luscious cheese filled tortilla sack from its home in the freezer, to my refrigerator, for the sake of the Great Thaw. I knew I had an oven. I could bake it all way, just leave it in the heat, until the cheese was oozing from the seams. I could bake it partway, and then fry it the rest of the way, but then I remembered that it would be thawed and the heating process didn't need to consist of such complex activities. I decided to fry it up. mmmm. a little olive oil in the pan. fry it. crispy crunchy tortilla. mmm. I needed some sour cream. So, as I was still on my bike, and near to the Rite-Aid (at this point, I debated on Safeway Vs. Rite Aid, knowing that both had sour cream, and since I wasn't particular as to what type, I opted for the latter, less crowded Rite Aid. I also had my bike, sans bike lock, so I knew that Rite Aid would let me bring my bike inside the door for a hot...or, really, more so, cool- minute, but I digress)..... I headed toward the store. Then, as I was nearing, I realized "I have no money". I even said it aloud to myself, in a deliberately drawn out and sad sounding meter, "I have no money". I put my head down, and kept on riding.

Tuesday, Tuesday, Tuesday

Sunday heavy with God stuff
Monday in bed with the ticker screaming bloody murder
Tuesday being (bless its heart)
Wednesday fat sitting in the middle
Thursday leering at tomorrow
Friday jittery with anticipation
Saturday fuzzed with last night's improprieties
.. and I feel bad about it all on Sunday
.. and I'm still dealing with it Monday, damp damn Monday
.. and I find Tuesday oddly poetic
..... so I stick it in a poem (Tuesday, Tuesday, Tuesday)
.. and Wednesday is all about revision, but I'm lazy
.. and Thursday is already
Friday in my mind
and Saturday is utterly useless
.. and I try to finish on
Sunday heavy with God Stuff

1 + 1 = 1

“Up there, see....you gotta stand up there and then you have the best view and stuff....yeah, it’s great...I really like it....”

These words were being spoken out loud and clearly by a disheveled looking young black woman who sat low on the church step, on the corner. She was pointing her hand up towards the large gothic auditorium across the street. As she spoke, she pointed to the top of the church that loomed above her and back across the street, as if explaining something to somebody.

This was the scene that unfolded itself to Henry as he approached the corner and the church stoop and the lady sitting upon it. She wore a cheerful countenance and appeared to be explaining something to somebody. But, there was no one around. Henry thought this odd and indicative of “crazy homeless people”, and just passed on by, a mere foot from the woman, not staring, looking forward. He sensed that she became aware of his presence as he passed close to her. He walked on, though, as not to interrupt any explaining that may be going on, and, really, he didn’t feel like talking to anybody. He was headed back to work. Work sometimes has a way of making you not want to talk to anybody. Office work, anyways. Some office work.

“Yeah, I see what you’re saying...SHIT! Wow! That’s Fucking Great! Fucking wish I could be on top of it! ‘d make my day....”

These words were being shouted, in all directions, by a very unkempt aging white man who stood on a suburban sidewalk that bordered a park. This particular park lay thirty miles North East of the young black woman on the church steps. The man was, very frenetically and tensely, moving his body from positions of leisure, leaning against the small wooden pillars that bordered the park grass, to positions of gyrating anguish...as if he was in pain, or couldn’t stop moving. Truth was, the man had a mild form of Parkinson’s disease, not to mention he was crazy, so he really had no choice in his inability to not move. This was unbeknownst to the eleven-year-old boy Jimmy, who watched this man shout and dance about, from across the street. If Jimmy’s friends would have been there with him, they would all have made fun of the man and laughed heartily and pointed, and a couple of the very brave ones would have shouted things like, “Hey!, can you do the funky chicken?!” and “How’s the weather in CrazyTown?!”

But, to the benefit of all, Jimmy stood alone, straddling his bicycle, watching this man like a three year old might watch an orangutan at the Zoo. Transfixed, but cautious.

What no one knew was that the young black woman and the aging white man were communicating. She heard him in her head and he heard her in his. He...now he was prone to hearing voices in his head. They usually sounded a lot like his own voice or they were voices that seemed inexplicably familiar. Like a great uncle’s nose that you’ve never seen before, but looks a lot like your dad’s...you know, that kind of thing. But the voice of the woman in his head, it was more bold, more crisp, something that he couldn’t resist responding to. This was very much how his voice sounded in her head as well. She wasn’t really used to hearing any

distinct unsolicited dialogue in her head, but she was no stranger to disorientation and aural hallucination (kids' screams whilst playing kickball in a lot she was passing by would manifest into the momentary belief that a riotous mob was in her proximity...**and possibly out to get her!!!**... and so forth), so she couldn't help but respond either.

This was their fourth conversation. The first happened, very coincidentally, while both parties were...how should I say...indisposed...auh contraunt (which is a French term I heard once in reference to going poo poo, but have no current idea of how to spell)...dropping the kids off at the pool, etc. They were both in public restrooms. He was in the restroom at the same park that he was currently standing near. There were no other people in the small brick building. I don't blame these nonexistent other people. It was a public park restroom like all the others you have probably experienced; Wetness everywhere (be it urine or janitor's hose, few dare even speculate), one wall mounted urinal aside from the stall that was in use by the man in question, who, let's just say, didn't have the healthiest diet and excreted odors along those lines. (note: for all of our soap, plumbing, and consumer friendly produce sectionals, modern day humans are the foulest smelling creatures to have the pleasure of slithering across this wondrous planet). Our pooping prince was in the process of dropping such fierce baño bombs that he uttered a barely audible "...phew, jesus..." in recognition.

Now, She. She was at the mall. She had wandered her way into the food court Women's bathroom. It was quite clean, she was happy to find, and she sat down in her own stall and closed the door. Even the porcelain was warm. She was very comfortable, but was still having a hard time getting anything to come out. Then commenced her grunting. She grunted in her head and through her mouth. It was very loud and guttural and real. So real that the two other women in the bathroom with her, sisters Jennie and Gloria, instantly asked, in unison, if our grunter was "ok". As she was in the zone at this moment, She replied with an even larger grunt. It was this grunt that was heard in the head of our Hero in the Park bathroom. This grunt was so carnally female (like a woman giving birth, he thought) that he shouted into the bathroom dampness, "What?!!", which was heard by a teenaged boy named John who was utilizing the drinking fountain outside of the park restroom. He stopped his lapping, and quietly walked to a different part of the park. Our man's inquiry was heard in the head of our woman at the mall bathroom and interrupted her mid-grunt. "Ungggggg....." It was at this point that the sisters left the bathroom and our woman, who responded moments later with an equally befuddled, "What?!!" The voices in the heads of our public restroom receivers soon started speaking of useful things to do with toilet paper rolls, etc. an hour or so later, they stopped hearing each others' voices. Tis a very temperamental thing, telepathy.

And so it was. These two lonely rogues spoke out loud to each other from a distance of roughly 30 miles and never really caught on that they were both real people and that a meeting could happen, etc. A perpetual missed connection. An intermittent surprise telephone conversation. A reason to believe in miracles....and the socially displaced...

DEAR ATTRACTIVE PERSON:

Please be aware that the young eligible single people in this house need some very Clear-cut Signals about whether or not you are attracted to them and if you would like to pursue social interactions along those lines (BLATANT FLIRTING PLEASE!). Any half-assed attempts at flirting will merely be interpreted as friendly banter and might not evoke the desired response. We're simply trying to "have fun" in the most efficient fashion around here, and probably not expecting that you would want to cuddle with us in any capacity, although I assure you that we would probably like nothing more than that very thing. Any attempts on your part to "spell it out" (a touch, a stare, a prolonged smile, a proposition involving any of those) would be greatly appreciated. We are a deliberately unaware and delightfully unassuming bunch, any given member of which, again, would probably jump at the opportunity for some good loving...especially from you...so...
Thank you for facilitating.

Sometimes I wish that I had powers. Nature-controlling, SuperHeroic powers. Specifically, the power to emit and control electromagnetic pulses, or, even something less science specific... Spirit beams, say, or something equally mystical that had the effect of rendering electronic systems inoperable....Fried out...dead to the world...(temporarily) unfixable. I would mostly just use it around automobiles, whilst riding my bike. Oh, what a grand thing it would be to be riding my bike, in harm's way, down streets void of bike lanes, hundreds of single occupant death machines hurtling by me, cutting me off at corners, their operators not looking at me, not looking at each other, honking like it's going out of style, polluting (I cannot prevent myself from assuming that at least a quarter of these people are probably en route to destinations close enough to be achieved through noncombustible means), and then, at once, with a mental "tinkle tinkle tink", in a blink, all of the spark plugs just stop firing. ...all fuel injection systems stop injecting...all on board navigation systems enter into a deep deep sleep. It would be glorious. People getting out of their motionless cars. Some people breaking down, falling to their knees from the stress of it all. I'd ride up to somebody and motion to the handlebars on my bike and say "want a lift?" ...and I'd be totally prepared to pump my ass off were someone to actually take me up on my offer..... which, I think it might be safe to assume, they would not....

Slid Slowly a Hand

Slowly a hand slid down my arm
From my shoulder to my hand slid slowly
A hand, flesh upon flesh, a fingertip against
My warm skin, and another and another and
All touching and moving
From my shoulder to my hand slid slowly
A hand

My Baggage

I lug it 'round w'ever I go.

My Life

A dwindling glass of burgundy and a failing sense of pride.

Decoration

Flowers stabbed to the wall
Hang dull dead ripped
Stolen and still dead
No matter How white and yellow they were